

Chapter 4

Campaigning

“First they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win.” Mahatma Gandhi

1. Campaigning as core to our theory of change

ActionAid believes that the root cause of poverty is an unjust distribution of economic, political or social power resulting in oppressive structures at local, national and international level. Campaigns seek to address the structural causes of poverty, such as unfair policies or corporate practices, to bring about long-term systemic change. We will not achieve systemic change without campaigning, so it is central to our theory of change.

Campaigns seek to achieve very specific, time-bound objectives, integrating and building on advocacy and organising. They involve focused, sustained pressure on particular targets to bring about political change. A campaign incorporates a range of tactics to achieve its agreed objectives, such as research, advocacy and public engagement (a range of activities that seek to shift and mobilise public opinion). In short, campaigning is the most intensive and comprehensive form of influencing we do.

Campaigning seeks to shift and mobilise opinions, attitudes and behaviours. It aims to reach the people who can make a difference and motivate them to support the campaign goal and take action. Sometimes we need the support of a broad cross-section of citizens to gain traction with decision-makers. At other times a particular constituency or interest group may be able to help you achieve your objective. ActionAid defines campaigning as, “creating and harnessing people’s power through organisation, mobilisation and communication around a simple and powerful demand, to achieve a measurable political or social change.”

Campaigns have varying timeframes. Campaigns that seek to get new issues on the political agenda or shift views in a new direction may need to focus on building up a supporter base, which can take years. In other cases, there may be a relatively short window of opportunity, linked to a specific external opportunity. In all cases, it is important that campaigns can respond quickly to the changing environment and political reality. They should be able to change direction or tactics at short notice and stay reactive to external events.

Campaigning as core to our theory of change

Our People’s Action strategy states the following about our view of campaigning:

“Campaigning and influencing is embedded in our rights-based approach. Some of the fundamental causes of poverty lie beyond the immediate location or borders where the effects are felt, and can be addressed by effective campaigns mobilising people to shift national or international policies or practices. This work can also include strategic actions behind the scenes – lobbying those in power with the right research, which can accelerate policy change. Sometimes challenges lie not in policies but in the attitudes and behaviours of people that perpetuate poverty. In such cases, media and mass communications is a critical part of campaigning for change.

So while local programmes are our fundamental base, they need to be linked upwards to national level (and sometimes beyond). We’ll do this by linking local groups to wider movements, gathering strong evidence, promoting policy analysis, building campaigns and using mass communications and digital media.”

For ActionAid to build distinctive campaigns, which respond to our theory of change, it is critical to integrate elements of empowerment (for example, empowering people living in poverty to advocate for their own rights as part of a campaign as well as monitoring policies and budgets) and solidarity (engaging people across communities and countries in pursuit of campaign goals). ActionAid's reach from local to global can also help build links and enable campaigning at different levels. In fact, coordinating these different types of work, at different levels, around a shared change objective and strategy can set ActionAid's campaigning apart.

ActionAid's campaigning can actually contribute to empowerment and solidarity work by building relationships between campaigners – from women farmers in local rights programmes and national ActionAid staff to young people across the world and ActionAid supporters. For example, generating evidence with women farmers' groups for a sustainable agriculture campaign can empower and build women's leadership. Linking these groups to one another to build a bigger and more powerful movement across different geographies is also empowering and builds solidarity too.

In this way, campaigning, empowerment and solidarity are mutually reinforcing. We can have more campaigning influence by improving people's power, organisation and capacity, whether they are our supporters, people living in poverty or any other constituency that ally with us.

ActionAid's campaigning is distinct for several other reasons, including:

- Our campaigns are based on a change strategy for shifting the power relations that block the change we want (locally, nationally, regionally or globally).
- Our close connections with people living in poverty, as well as our research and policy analysis, inform and strengthen our campaigns. Our connection with people living in poverty allows us to base our campaign priorities, objectives and strategy in real experience. Our constituents lead our campaigns.
- Our campaigns are strongly influenced by the need to link with and amplify the struggles and organisations of women and people living in poverty, while also being an effective actor in our own right, using our analysis and reach to influence national, regional and global power structures.
- Given our analysis of the importance and the central role of women's rights in the struggle against poverty and injustice, our campaigns should specifically focus on women's rights. We should include this throughout the campaign at all stages – in analysis, objectives, actions and choice of allies and partners.
- Our campaigns help build future generations of active citizens by fostering youth engagement and leadership.

2. Campaigning tools and methods: the whats and hows

Campaigns aim to get wins on very specific, time-bound objectives. So they must set clear objectives and strategy focus. We always need to set clear short-term objectives and focus, outlining how changes will happen one step at a time, where one successful step leads to another. This is sometimes called a "critical path" in campaigning. We should not address a holistic set of issues in all of their complexity all at once, as we often do in our programme work or policy analysis. Ultimately, campaigns win by taking successful steps along the way towards an eventual win and knowing how to measure, show and message those successes to activists.

A campaign may be "about an issue", but to engage people it needs a very tight focus, communicating clear, bold and simple demands in a way that creates an entry point for immediate action. Our theory of change and a power analysis must underpin this, to identify where power lies, who benefits, who does not and how to build sufficient people power to achieve change.

(For more information on critical paths and power analysis as a tool for campaigning, see pages 80 and 82 respectively.)

Biofuels in a village in Senegal

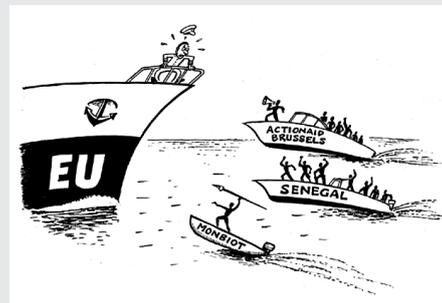
Working with several civil society organisations, ActionAid Senegal actively participated in the mobilisation of Fanaye's people (a village in northern Senegal) to say no to an Italian biofuel project. The authorities gave the project 20,000 hectares of land. However, more than 1,000 people from 30 villages were against it, and organised several mobilisations.

Rural communities thought the project was unacceptable mainly because it would have taken over a large area they used to raise livestock. It would have wreaked economic, social and environmental damage. Farmers who had lived there for centuries would have been evicted and grazing areas, arable areas, lakes and forests would have disappeared. Despite community protest, the government did little to stop the project until conflict in Fanaye killed two people and seriously injured several others. The prime minister has suspended the project temporarily to calm communities.

ActionAid Senegal and ActionAid Italy, working with an Italian TV programme, did some interviews and filmed the mobilisation for advocacy work at national and international levels. This has had some impact. For example, following a meeting in Italy, the Italian government committed to take the problems with the project into account in its new biofuel law. The government also promised to invite ActionAid Senegal to any event it organises related to biofuel. In addition, the EU impact assessment on biofuels and land is going to use the case in 2012 and the Mali International Peasants' Conference will discuss it. At national level, farmers' organisations, social movements, NGOs and human rights groups have set up a monitoring and alert committee to warn civil society actors, journalists and decision-makers about new land grabbing cases. ActionAid Senegal has a core position on this committee.

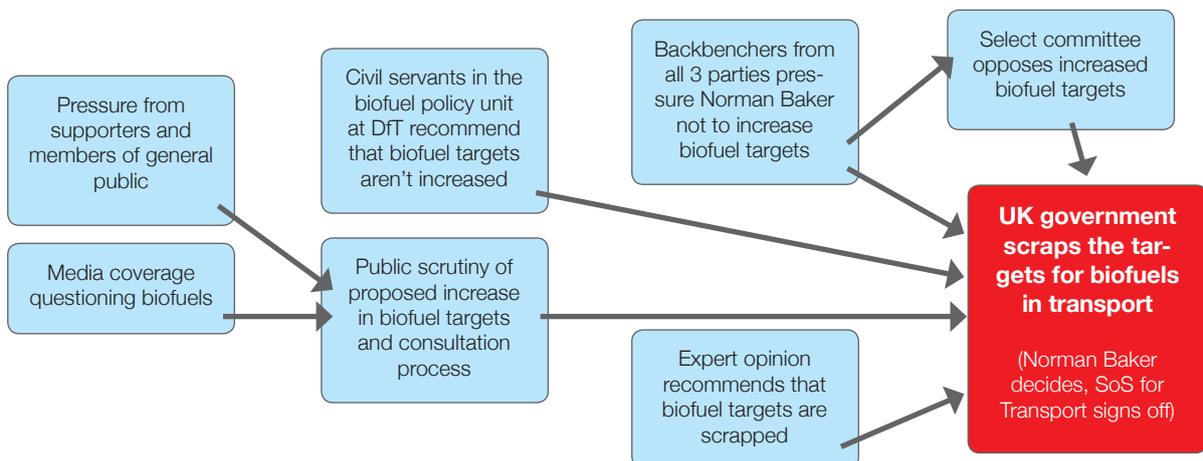
This campaign was successful because:

- People's organisations in Senegal led the movement.
- ActionAid was able to leverage change beyond the local level by engaging in national and international policy work, in Italy, and with the EU and G20.
- The campaign was grounded in evidence.
- The campaign made links with the media.



Critical path example for UK dimension of the biofuels campaign

Biofuel campaign critical path - Oct '10 to Feb/March '11



You can take several different approaches to developing a campaign strategy. Most campaigns take a relatively similar approach (see below for tips on designing campaigns).

Campaigns also have varying timeframes, and use a variety of methods, depending on their strategy. Campaigns aiming to get new issues on the political agenda require more emphasis on building up a support base and organisation, which can take years. However, campaigns seeking an incremental change to current laws or practice can be relatively short and capitalise on current public interest. Campaign tools and tactics could involve any mix of:

- research for evidence-building and campaigning impact
- advocating for rights and lobbying for change
- public engagement, recruitment of supporters, mobilisation and action
- using communication for change, for example, the media, digital marketing, advertising and publicity
- building alliances and coalitions.

There is more information on each of these tactics below.

Tips for designing a campaign

- **Identify the issue.** Do an initial scoping of the problem you are trying to solve, the potential solution, likely campaign objectives and what long-term change your campaign wants to bring.
- **Define your objectives.** What can you do about the problem in the short or medium term? Deeply analyse the problem, exploring potential solutions, examining the broader context, assessing the capacity to influence and developing a critical path to achieve change. An effective objective will be precise and realistic; say what you want to change; who will make the change; and how much change you want to achieve and by when. Objectives must be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound).
- **Power analysis.** We need to know where power lies, who benefits, who does not and how to build enough people power to achieve change (see [page 82](#) for more information).
- **Critical pathway:** Describe the critical path for the campaign – the series of steps in which achieving one is necessary to move on to the next (best planned backwards from the objective). Completing each step is essential to achieve the end objective, and is a milestone along the way to campaign success (see [page 110](#) for an example critical path).
- **Do you need a public-facing campaign?** This is the time to ask whether you can achieve your objectives through other means (advocacy or awareness-raising, for example).
- **Target audiences and key messages.** Describe briefly who your target audiences for the campaign are. What are the key messages for each target audience? What will actually convince your primary targets, and those in the influencing chain?
- **Influencing strategy.** Describe your strategy for influencing each target audience in a clear project plan. This should include a plan for each “phase” of the campaign detailing how you propose to achieve the campaign objective(s) and a detailed plan of activities and tactics for achieving your goals.
- **Evaluation criteria.** Explain how you will judge the success of the campaign. What are your indicators of success, both for your intermediary changes, and for overall changes?
- **ActionAid’s added value.** Describe how ActionAid’s campaign contributes to the work of others, and what specific contribution ActionAid will make.
- **Risks, assumptions and constraints.** Describe the main risks, assumptions and constraints your project may face (whether internal or external).
- **Create an action plan.** This needs to have a clear path with steps and a timeline for how to put the campaign into action and at which steps to monitor and evaluate.
- Do not forget to also outline a **monitoring and evaluation framework** (see [page 94](#) for more information).



Identifying and monitoring milestones along the way towards the “big” change strengthens the movement of rights holders and supporters

3. Research for evidence-building and campaigning impact

Research and policy analysis (including gender analysis) is necessary in any campaign to build solutions and evidence to convince decision-makers and opinion leaders to make change happen. They are essential to establish the framework through which ActionAid understands the causes of and solutions to poverty, to build our theory of change, and to assess when we need to campaign to create change.

Campaigning research needs to make the case or argument to back our campaigning goals. It aims to influence policy and behaviour change. It will make recommendations for the policy changes we want to see, and should focus on supporting other campaign activities (lobby or media work, for example).

Research in support of our campaigning strategy broadly comes in two forms:

1. Research that supports setting the direction, focus and development of campaign plans. At the outset, research can help us get from broad goals to strategically-focused objectives. As the campaign develops we may also analyse emerging policy trends or develop positions in greater detail to shape future campaign plans.
2. Research that creates impact around our campaign goals. This often focuses on reaching a key external audience or target with facts and evidence. Sometimes its primary aim is to gain media coverage or profile for a specific campaigning goal. We will often launch it when we are trying to get profile for an issue or add pressure to a process.

Please note, it is very important that we test our research to check what risk level it has for ActionAid. To help steer clear of and mitigate legal risks we have produced a checklist (<http://act.ai/NNNXm5>). ActionAid does not seek to avoid libel risk completely, because that would mean never making negative statements about companies or individuals. On the contrary, we are proud of our track record of courage in exposing human rights violations. At the same time, it is important to know and understand the law so we do not expose ourselves to unnecessary and expensive wrangles that could tie up our campaigning in legal knots for years.

There is also a number of types of research that can support our **evidence-building** to ensure we make our arguments effectively. Our long-term engagement in particular communities means we can track issues over time, building evidence and bringing it to national and international attention. Moreover, given our closeness to communities and our theory of change’s emphasis on giving people living in poverty a voice, our research should have a strong focus on offering solutions from our work with communities and highlighting the “real” issues facing the people we work with.

This kind of evidence gathering might include:

- **Drawing on our existing monitoring and evaluation systems.** These track progress against key locally- and nationally-defined indicators and their contribution towards meta indicators.
- **Action-research.** We test out an intervention and track its impact over time where we are seeking to collate evidence from different contexts. This may mean new field research, or finding ways to document the undocumented.
- **Collaborative research.** We do joint research with diverse groups including, for example, community leaders, government officials and smallholder farmers, so those with the power to take action own the research results.
- **Longitudinal research.** We use our long-term engagement in particular communities to track longer-term changes. We have good, relevant baseline data in communities where we work so we can collect data at any point to inform a campaign.
- **Market research/opinion polls.** We collect people's views on an issue and bring them to national attention.

We may form lots of different strategic partnerships to collect evidence for a campaign. Sometimes, linking with a leading national university or think tank can add credibility and weight. But we need to choose research partners strategically and ensure they can produce relevant research for our campaigning (and not just pure academic research, which often has very different purposes and framing).

What is a campaign power analysis?

A campaign power analysis helps to inform campaign planning, giving the underpinnings and foundations on which to build a campaign strategy.

When do you do a power analysis?

Analysis will be ongoing throughout your programming. Initially, it will help you outline the change you want to see. Your power analysis then looks at key actors and their positions in relation to an issue and context. Undertaking a power analysis helps you target the right actions to the right people at the right time to secure change. A power analysis enables you to develop:

- a clear understanding of the political, social and economic environment you are operating in
- an analysis of how you can make change happen within that context
- clarity on the key individuals you need to influence and tailor-made strategies on how to influence them.

What do you actually do when carrying out a power analysis?

Once you have a clear idea of the objectives of a campaign, here are some key questions to address when doing a power analysis (although it is not an exhaustive list):

- **What needs to change?** What laws, policies, practices, markets or relationships? What are the obstacles to change? Think about the political, financial, economic reasons or the attitudes of others which might block change.
- **Defining your targets.** What is the target's current position and what might influence them to change? Who has the power to make change happen? Who and what influences them?
- **Defining tools to influence your targets.** Which tools can you best adapt for a specific target? What is most likely to change their mind? Research? Lobbying key advisers? Criticism in the media?
- **Identifying allies and opponents.** Who might support you or work with you towards change (allies)? Are there other powerful key players who could block change (opponents)?
- **Identifying political opportunities for change.** Are there any key external events and milestones when you might seek to apply pressure? Elections? Policy reforms? Major events?
- **Make sure you do an assets assessment.** This will help you better understand and identify the resources and capacity to rally constituents to action.

4. Advocating for rights and lobbying for change

Advocacy is the deliberate process of influencing those who make policy. It is about engaging with power holders, and influencing them to adopt our preferred solutions. Advocacy can be defined as “pleading or arguing in favour of an idea, cause or policy”.

Advocacy is heavily based on collecting facts and evidence and putting compelling solutions in front of decision-makers, sometimes accompanied by a targeted media or communication strategy for reaching our intended target. Essentially, advocacy is the strategic use of information to influence the policies and actions of those in positions of power or authority to achieve positive changes in people's lives.

Where possible, ActionAid's advocacy should focus on creating space and seeking to prioritise the voices of people living in poverty, and their representatives. Our links to programmes mean we can draw on our work in communities to build powerful alternatives and data to build up the evidence base for our advocacy. Empowering marginalised groups and civil society representatives to speak up for their rights can yield wider benefits, increasing these groups' political participation. Another added value of the ActionAid federation in our advocacy work is that we can build relationships and have access to key stakeholders in multiple spaces. We can access diverse institutions around the globe, including the G20, EU and the African Union.

Advocacy often involves an element of “insider lobbying” (where experts and senior civil society organisation leaders seek to persuade decision-makers directly, through face-to-face meetings). However, advocacy can also use participatory approaches, such as social audits, accountability monitoring, mass lobbies and bringing people to testify to government bodies. As such, advocacy generally involves a combination of policy work, lobbying and media interventions.

Although advocacy and lobbying are sometimes used interchangeably, we define **lobbying** more narrowly than advocacy. It refers to face-to-face meetings, or lobby letters, and engagements at events and other direct attempts to influence policy-makers, public officials and other decision-makers through personal interviews and persuasion.

The cornerstone of lobbying is shaping the agenda of meetings around a “deliverable” for the decision-maker. A key aspect to lobbying is building relationships. This might happen at any level, and may be the first step to building a wider advocacy strategy. Lobbying does not only happen at national and international levels. For example, at community level, *Reflect* circle participants may lobby local chiefs to oppose a biofuel deal.

Women's rights in our campaigning

ActionAid's analysis of poverty and inequality places women's rights as central to achieving change. Thus women's rights must be at the heart of our campaigning. However, far too often this doesn't happen meaningfully. Sometimes the campaign story is “about women” without bringing the underlying differences between women and men into the heart of the campaign. Likewise, adding in a gender perspective after doing the main analysis leads to including phrases like “especially women and girls”, and it remains an add-on to the campaign's aims and approaches. You need to integrate and ask questions at each stage of the campaign design, including: Is gender integrated in the background analysis? Is this well reflected in the goals and objectives? Is it considered within the power analysis? Are women's organisations strong in the alliance?

5. Public engagement, recruitment, mobilisation and action

Campaigning seeks to shift and mobilise opinions, attitudes and behaviours, reaching out to people to persuade them to support a goal, and hopefully to contribute actively to the campaign with time or money.

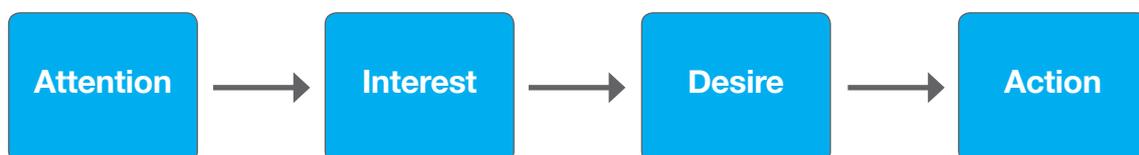
The first step in this process is **engagement and recruitment**. We have to reach out to people and inspire them to become engaged and involved in our campaigns. We often do this through our communications work (see below). As part of our campaign design we also need to ensure that we are clear about which parts of the public we are seeking to engage and motivate to join our campaign. ActionAid has a strong commitment to working with young people to inspire them to take action and join our campaigns. Youth are therefore a central part of our engagement plans. We want to massively grow our youth campaigner base (see below).

Once we have inspired and engaged our target audience, we also need to find ways for them to get involved in the campaign and to show their support for an issue by taking a **campaign action or mobilising** in support. We need to mobilise them at critical moments in our campaign plan (for example, when government is deciding a new piece of policy or when parliament is discussing relevant issues). We can then use our “people power” to demonstrate that there is mass public support for the changes our campaigns seeks.

It is important to note that while the number of people on the streets often characterises successful campaigns, a campaign should only seek to mobilise the people necessary for achieving its change. Sometimes the support of a broad cross-section of citizens is needed to gain traction with decision-makers. But at other times it may be a particular constituency or interest group that can help you win your campaign.

Campaigning can require organised ways of recruiting, communicating with and being accountable to participants. At local level this may be easy enough. But above local level it can be more complicated – and can often become a full time job! ActionAid is dedicated to growing our base of committed individuals campaigning together and to shifting ourselves towards a movement of activists. However, unlike many successful membership-based “campaigning organisations”, such as Greenpeace, Amnesty and Avaaz, ActionAid does not have a membership structure. So finding ways to engage and be accountable to campaigners and activists will be an important part of improving our campaigning capabilities. Campaigning can help connect the policy goals and fundraising goals and initiatives of our organisations. Supporters who become activists are more invested in the organisation and activists who believe in a campaign are more likely to become supporters.

From engagement to action:



Youth activism and the Activista network

ActionAid has agreed to develop two inter-connected strands of work to mobilise more than five million youth by 2017:

1. Empowering and mobilising 3.5 million **young women and men living in poverty**. Of the 3.5 million, 50% will be female.
2. Empowering and mobilising 1.5 million young women and men as part of a **solidarity movement**.

These ambitious goals provide a bold new vision for ActionAid to build and consolidate on our previous work, particularly through the Activista network. They represent a radical scaling-up of our ambitions around engaging youth as key agents of change.

The majority of the world's population is now young people (about 65% are under 30). Youth are disproportionately represented in communities living in poverty. This makes them a powerful potential source of change. Youth are not only the leaders of tomorrow, but also drivers of change today. To build our capacity to ensure young people's sustained engagement as activists, we will need to significantly enhance our ability to capture their imaginations, reach out to them in larger numbers and find ways to continue this engagement. This will involve developing and using the channels that engage youth (social media, for example) and investing more effectively in digital activism.

As part of this we will continue to grow our Activista network. In the coming years, Activista aims to:

- empower and enable young people to actively participate in the decision-making and political processes that affect their lives, significantly improving ActionAid's efforts to end poverty
- build as a global youth movement, a platform for young people around the world, from low and high income countries, urban and rural areas, to unite, share ideas and act in solidarity
- raise the visibility of ActionAid as a dynamic, youthful, effective campaigning organisation, increasing our ability to attract campaigners and create social change.

6. Communications for change

Campaigns are all about **communicating** with people and targets and tapping emotions (not just logic) to motivate and mobilise them. Our campaigning must harness the power of mass communications. We can also use communications to amplify the voices of people living in poverty and injustice and facilitate their opportunities for dialogue with each other, with other stakeholders and with ActionAid.

Communication is one of the most important facets of a campaign. If you cannot effectively communicate, people will not be motivated to act, and you will not reach your campaign objective. To be truly effective we must be clear about what audiences we are targeting, why we want to reach them and which channels or mediums are most appropriate in each case. Mobile and social networking will be key for some audiences but letter writing, radio or TV may reach others.

Often campaigners become too close to the issue to be able to see what motivates other people, so strategic advice on communications is important. What motivates us now as committed and informed campaigners is unlikely to be what will motivate the majority into action. Do not be afraid to use emotive messaging. While it is important to offer logical, well argued solutions, emotions motivate most people more than logic.

The **media** is a very effective tool in our campaigning, from community radio stations to high profile national news. We can use it to reach out to the public to engage them with our campaign communications and also to reach political targets. Conventional TV, radio and newspapers remain important to decision-makers. But the rest of the population is better reached through “non-news” media. Digital media has a global audience and the potential for global impact. **Online activism** is particularly helpful in contexts where public demonstrations are illegal or risky. Social networking sites and email are the most obvious channels for campaigners to use, but effective use of digital channels still largely depends on what else the campaign is doing, away from the network itself, to make it interesting.

In both low and high income countries, text messaging, social networking and other forms of online interaction are becoming powerful. For example, an Avaaz campaign can now easily mobilise millions of voices. A number of campaigning organisations are beginning to invest more and more in SMS and mobile phone activism. For example, Greenpeace has used mobile phones as a tool in many different campaigns.

Campaigning is a multi-functional process and must involve a variety of different roles across the organisation. ActionAid is committed to developing our campaign strategies as part of multi-functional teams to maximise results. It is therefore important to include and integrate communications specialists early on in campaign design. They can help ensure messages are easy-to-understand for the public and media.

7. Building strategic alliances and coalitions

The right alliance has the potential to shift politics. For a campaign to have the momentum to secure change we often need to work in alliances and coalitions. Whether or not to run a campaign with an alliance or coalition, of course, depends on our campaign strategy and whether we are more likely to get a win by working with others.

Depending on the context and the issue, the kinds of people or groups we might work with, in coalition, could include middle class citizens, the media, trade unions, legislators, celebrities, faith-based organisations, other NGOs and business groups. While giving priority to campaigning alliances with rights holders' organisations and movements, we acknowledge that they cannot always achieve the desired social change.

An alliance needs to be big enough to build critical momentum, but focused enough to share common objectives. When building an alliance or coalition for our campaigns, it is critical to clarify the “rules of the game” from the start. It is common to build an alliance without being clear what it is for, which can lead to later problems. Is it for focused lobbying, for research and analysis, or for mass campaigning? The aim of the alliance will have big implications for how big it should be and who are the right partners. Once you know its aim, you can work to develop the right mix of skills around the table.

In making the decision about campaigning with others there will always be some tensions around:

- **Running our own branded campaign.** This gives us complete control to promote our own distinctive positions and can be great for raising our profile and public support for ActionAid (often yielding significant fundraising benefits). But it might mean we do not have as much influence (as we are a lone voice).
- **Seeking to build a wider campaign alliance/coalition.** Joining with others to build a larger critical mass can amplify the effectiveness of the campaign (many voices together count for more, especially in a campaign). But it may lead us to make compromises on our positions (respecting the views of others) and will mean less profile for our brand.
- **Joining an existing alliance or coalition.** This involves submerging our brand identity and simply adding our voice to an existing campaign because we believe it will make a difference and that our involvement can add momentum/value.

It is best to acknowledge the competing pressures (we want to change the world but we also need our organisation to thrive to continue making a change) and recognise that these choices are never easy. Our decision about the nature of the campaign we run or join should be framed fundamentally around what will ultimately have most impact for people living in poverty.

Top tips for working with coalitions

Commonwealth Education Fund. *Driving the bus: The journey of national education coalitions*. 2008.

- If we are funding or housing a coalition we should be very conscious of our own power. We need to make sure we do not abuse that power to assert our own agenda but rather use it to ensure democratic processes that engage the full membership.
- We need to ensure that the priorities of a national coalition are genuinely linked to national priorities rather than having an agenda driven by international pressures.
- We should ensure that a coalition remains open to new members joining rather than becoming a closed group. We also need to make sure that one agency or one tendency does not dominate or capture it.
- We should encourage coalitions to be open to a broad range of actors, for example social movements, faith-based organisations, private sector champions, parliamentarians and journalists. This can make their voice much more powerful.
- We should make sure that a coalition is connected to grassroots work on whatever issue it is concerned with, so that it does not just become a talking shop for people in the capital city, divorced from the voices and perspectives of people on the ground.
- We need to ensure that a coalition has clearly defined and achievable ends, and keeps focused on the political agenda that brought actors together, rather than chasing project funding and becoming an institution itself.
- We need to ensure that the secretariat of a coalition works to facilitate the active engagement of the membership, rather than becoming an organisation itself that replaces or displaces the efforts of its members.
- We should be wary of coalition coordinators becoming lifetime appointments, where the coalition becomes synonymous with the coordinator rather than a platform or voice for diverse members (in such contexts we need to empower members to take action).
- If a coalition becomes very successful and secures large-scale funding we need to be wary that it does not just become a fund manager, that members are not just there to get money and that the political voice is not lost.

8. Campaigning at different levels of ActionAid

ActionAid's reach, which goes from local to global, means we can campaign at a number of different levels. Our theory of change highlights the benefits of building on different power struggles and globalising local struggles, as well as localising global struggles.

As a global federation, with strong grassroots programmes, a global reach and good relationships with stakeholders at all levels, we have a unique ability to link constituencies to build change together. Campaigns can be purely local but because human rights are universal, participating in national or multi-country campaigns is a great way to link people, movements and issues across localities to make a bigger impact on the causes of poverty.

Depending on our analysis and theory of change, we will prioritise our campaigning at different levels. If our analysis shows that we need to campaign against local government to achieve the changes our programming identifies, we will do that. However, if our analysis shows that we can only achieve change on an issue if we target a global policy or institution, we will also campaign there.

Campaigning in different contexts

A campaign is more likely to work in certain contexts, for example where there is:

- space for civil society to act
- space for public protest or dissent
- vibrant, independent media
- socially aware, politically active citizens
- robust and active partners.

Different contexts may also dictate a different mix of insider/outsider tactics; a larger or smaller role for INGOs versus social movements and middle class groupings versus those directly affected.

However, even in repressive contexts, we can create different types of public space, or support the building of civil society to help gradually open space, still allowing people to make their issues visible to decision-makers.

Campaigning in local rights programmes

As part of our local rights programme analysis we may identify a local issue that is ripe for campaigning, as opposed to other methods of programming. The decision to initiate a campaign at local level is based on our analysis that we can bring about change on a particular issue that violates people's rights locally.

Local campaigning often focuses on improving the *implementation* of policies and identifies local level targets for bringing about the changes identified (for example changing local budget allocations, stopping corruption, changing local by-laws or regulations or holding office bearers accountable for the performance of officials). Since government spending is one of the most visible ways in which government acts on the lives of people, for better or worse, budget monitoring is often a useful foundation for local campaigning work. We are unlikely to campaign for policy changes at the local level, as this typically requires national level strategies and change, and thus national level campaigning.

We may also campaign on issues that are relevant locally but where our analysis shows that we need to link to other levels to reach our targets. In some cases, these might be out-of-country targets (see below for an example of local campaigning taking the struggle to international targets). As part of this, we may want to make connections and bring the issue to the attention of people locally, nationally or internationally. Local campaigning and organising can also link to strong national or international campaigns, where we want to ensure a strong engagement from people living in poverty and those directly affected. In this case, our local campaigning will link to a broader series of campaigning activities and organising of communities around agreed national/international campaign goals.

The type of campaigning work in a local rights programme may vary over its lifetime. In the early phases it sometimes makes sense to identify simple, easy-win campaigns that can help to build the confidence of people in campaigning as an approach and strengthen local organisations. For example, this may involve campaigning for a particular service from local government. At a later stage, when there are high levels of critical awareness and organisation, the campaign may be to challenge national government to shift policy on an issue that is relevant to the local area, requiring wider alliances with people in other areas.

Dalit rights in Nepal

In 1999, a group of dalit chamars in one local rights programme took a united stand against the age-old caste hierarchy system by refusing to dispose of an animal carcass. Other groups soon followed suit. They were members of *Reflect* circles ActionAid Nepal and local partners had set up to develop the political and critical consciousness of dalit men and women, eventually leading to a widespread dalit empowerment movement and rights campaign to eradicate all forms of caste-based discrimination. Now 95% of dalit children access education, and many dalits are key politicians and social activists.

The campaign has been successful because:

- Dalit communities have led it.
- It builds dalit critical awareness and empowers the dalit movement through Reflect circles, advocacy and budget literacy training and by seconding well known social rights activists to the project. All this led to the formation and raised awareness of sangams (indigenous dalit rights movements).
- ActionAid linked the different sections of the movement together and opened space for them to connect with the media, politicians and other movements.
- Dalit resistance was communicated widely, and public opinion changed as a result of peaceful demonstrations, such as a lantern rally.

Source: ActionAid. *Frontline story of change: Fighting for dalit rights.* 2010. <http://act.ai/MnDivj>

The Vedanta campaign: taking local struggles to global targets

Niyamgiri mountain in the state of Orissa, India, is the ancestral home of thousands of one of the world's most vulnerable tribal peoples. The Kondh rely on the mountain for their food, medicines and culture. It is also the seat of their god, the supreme deity Niyam Raja.

ActionAid supported the Kondh in their battle with UK mining giant Vedanta Resources. The company wanted to build an open-pit bauxite (aluminium) mine at the top of Niyamgiri mountain. This would force the Kondh tribe to move elsewhere and their unique way of life would be lost forever.

The Kondh tribe were determined to protect the mountain. They held several demonstrations against the company. ActionAid India supported the Kondh community by providing legal support for the community's challenges; documenting environmental and human rights violations; creating media attention around the threat; facilitating the community's mobilisation; taking part in behind-the-scenes lobbying; and by maintaining a daily, on the ground relationship with the Kondh people.

However, it soon became clear that to have an impact on the power and might of Vedanta, it was important to take the Kondh people's struggle beyond the community level – and in fact beyond the national level. With Vedanta listed on the British stock exchange, campaigners and media staff at ActionAid UK and ActionAid International highlighted the issue to UK media and investors, using a two-pronged approach that covered the company's legal home-base (the UK) and the site of the human rights violations (India).

Using strategic media stunts, celebrity spokespeople, submissions to the UK government, investor lobbying, and by enabling the Kondh people to speak at AGMs, ActionAid's work outside India added power to the movement in Orissa. The Joseph Rowntree Trust and the Church of England, two major, high profile investors, pulled out of the company in February 2010. Both cited concerns about the rights of the Kondh tribe. This caused Vedanta's share price to drop and damaged the company's reputation considerably.

In August 2010, after six years of national and international campaigning, disinvestment by key Vedanta shareholders and protracted legal challenges, we had a breakthrough. The Indian government refused vital environmental permission for the mine to go ahead. The Environmental Minister Jairam Ramesh came out strongly against the mine, criticising the company on several grounds and accusing it of breaking the law. ActionAid continues to stand alongside the Kondh tribe to make sure the Indian government does not go back on its decision.



National campaigning

As outlined above, often our analysis within local rights programmes identifies the need for national level changes, for our work to have a wider impact on the communities we work with. We may identify a priority problem for a community, such as national policies or laws that cannot be tackled through our local level interventions alone.

Of course, there is always a multitude of issues that communities are grappling with at any one time and we have to prioritise our engagement in national campaigning issues. This might involve identifying issues from one or more local rights programmes, where we have recognised an opportunity for a clear, winnable change to occur through national level campaigning on a specific issue (for example, the government is considering a change in policies which we think we can have a positive influence over). Alternatively, identifying a national campaign may be driven by an issue which we think has the chance of large-scale public appeal to galvanise support behind or where there are opportunities to work with a broad set of allies to push for change.

Some national campaigns may also have links “upwards and downwards”, where our analysis and strategies show that linking across multiple levels and geographies can secure change. As such, ActionAid has identified three major, multi-country campaigns which we will work on during the People’s Action strategy period, building these upwards and downwards links.

ActionAid Brazil's national education campaign

Together with other organisations, ActionAid Brazil created the award-winning *Brazilian campaign for the right to education*.

The campaign saw a major success in 2007 when the Brazilian parliament approved the FUNDEB (Basic Education Fund), guaranteeing funding of basic public education in Brazil with an annual budget of US\$30 billion. It ensured the right to education for 50 million students.

This is the kind of large-scale national legislation which can help secure widespread changes, not only in our local rights programmes but for all children across Brazil.

To get the law passed, civil society joined hands in a very focused campaign, with clearly defined objectives over the three years, targeting the federal government and parliament.

Some of the key elements and tactics in its success were:

- It was very broad-based, attracting a large cross-section of organisations, from businesses to women's groups, building and mobilising important partnerships and linking people living in poverty with their solidarity movements.
- It focused on winning the hearts and minds of the population by reaching out widely. There were radio and TV phone-ins, mobilisations in all areas of the country and public demonstrations. One of the key turning points was when a member of the movement placed a child on the minister of finance's lap.
- It was both strategic and opportunistic. While everyone's attention was on the football World Cup in Germany, the movement created a *Score a goal for education* campaign involving major Brazilian sports personalities. This came from the overarching and long-term strategy, while making the most of an opportunity.
- It was solutions-based. Rather than only being critical, the movement offered solutions, including providing new wording of the law's text.

9. ActionAid's multi-country campaign portfolio

National campaigning or campaigning across two countries will not secure some changes, which instead require campaigning across many countries. Such multi-country campaigns can unite constituencies in different countries around a clear global or regional goal that affects people in many places.

As an international federation, the more we work together and harness our collective power across the organisation – linking local, national and international campaigning – the more likely it is that we will secure large-scale, meaningful change in the lives of people living in poverty. Our People's Action strategy commits us to “develop and deliver a portfolio of at least three diverse multi-country campaigns that will bring people living in poverty and others together to win tangible victories against the global causes of poverty. Bringing to life the political vision behind ActionAid's internationalisation project, all members will be expected to participate actively in at least one of ActionAid's multi-country campaigns”. Therefore, all member countries will have an opportunity to participate in and benefit from, but also a responsibility to contribute to, the delivery of the campaign portfolio.

Following consultation and strategy development, linked to identifying how our campaigning can help us reach our organisational goals in the People's Action strategy, we have defined a campaign “portfolio”.

How we developed our portfolio was strongly linked to the development of our programming framework (and the development of this resource book, especially part two). While developing our programming around the strategic objectives and change promises, we have identified where the multi-country campaigns will help us to deliver local to international change.

Our commitment to a portfolio of multi-country campaigns (as opposed to, for example, only one multi-country campaign) recognises that:

- Our very ambitious mission objectives and key change promises require us to campaign across a number of issues to achieve the strategy's goals.
- Any one campaign is not equally relevant across all member countries. We need member countries to focus their campaigning where they are strategically relevant and can make the most difference.
- The strategy sets out ambitious targets in terms of profile-raising and mobilisation, including increasing our supporter base to more than five million people and mobilising five million young people as key change-makers. Our campaigning will be a key vehicle for making this a reality; therefore the multi-country campaigns need to be relevant and compelling for supporters across the federation.
- Every campaign goes through a natural cycle with periods of more active public work and some quieter times where the focus is on following up and preparing for the next active period. A portfolio of campaigns will allow us to have one campaign in an active phase at all times, which will help keep our profile high, mobilising money and supporters.

Our three multi-country campaigns (agreed in the Programme Meeting in Johannesburg in March 2012) are provisionally called:

- *Progressive tax, progressively spent*
- *From land grabs to land rights*
- *Safe cities and urban spaces for women and girls*

Each of these contributes concretely to the achievement of one or more of our change promises (as illustrated in the critical pathways in part two).

Progressive tax, progressively spent

This campaign is about ensuring governments raise more revenue through tax, and spend it on better public services. Tax is the major source of revenue for all countries, even those highly dependent on aid. Yet tax revenue collection mechanisms in many developing countries are weak and unfair. Powerful corporations negotiate exemptions and favourable conditions, paying less tax than ordinary citizens. Or they evade taxes altogether – and do not reinvest profits in developing countries. This is coupled with unfavourable international systems (tax havens, for example) that facilitate tax-cheating and undermine developing countries.

Tackling tax injustice could generate an additional US\$198 billion in revenue for developing countries every year. Our campaign will also help ensure that this money pays for better public services for women and men living in poverty. The campaign will link progressive taxes and progressive spending, and will look at greater accountability and transparency on both sides (revenue collection and spending).

The campaign contributes primarily to mission objective two, change promises three and four. Tax justice work is already ongoing in ActionAid, with significant successful work so far that puts us in a good place to engage further. Tax justice is at the heart of a HRBA, as governments need resources to deliver on rights.

From land grabs to land rights

Land grabbing is a growing global phenomenon, now affecting communities on every continent. In Africa alone nearly 5% of all land – an area equivalent to Zimbabwe – has in the last few years been grabbed. Addressing this issue is urgent as it is critical to securing the livelihoods and rights of people living in poverty, and to securing women's equitable right to land in the longer term. Addressing land grabbing involves challenging unequal power relations through our campaigning at local, national and international levels.

Through our *Land grab* campaign we hope to achieve:

- secured land tenure with countries adopting and implementing the UN voluntary guidelines
- globally agreed, fair investment standards integrated in domestic policy
- fair investment standards applied by three major companies
- protection for communities through a moratorium on land investment
- removal of key drivers of global land grabs, for example, by 2017 the EU and US to drop targets and financial incentives for biofuels, setting a precedent for others.

This campaign contributes primarily to key change promise one.

Safe cities and urban spaces for women and girls

This campaign will make us the only INGO campaigning on issues related to urban poverty and women's rights. It will build on our expertise on rural poverty and our growing expertise on urban poverty, while recognising the increase in urban populations (in two decades, almost 60% of the world's population will live in cities).

Our campaign will offer cities an incentive to improve safety and highlight the impact of safety (or lack thereof) on the rights of women and girls living in poverty. We will encourage cities to improve their performance year-on-year by highlighting their relative safety levels on a global scale.

Our key targets are women and girls living in urban poverty. We will mobilise women to demand the changes necessary to end violence and for them to participate in public debates on the issue. We will target local and national governments in the north and the south to demand attention to unsafe cities and urban spaces and call on them to guarantee the necessary legal, policy and infrastructure reforms to make cities and urban spaces safer for women.

Our tactics will include using global events and sporting occasions, where we will launch a "kitemark" to rate cities against a set of "safety" or "freedom from urban violence" criteria. Our ultimate goal will be for this kitemark to be displayed at world events, like the Olympics and World Cup.

The campaign builds on our existing work under change promise nine, which addresses wider violence against women, including domestic violence, and should enable us to develop an edge and a niche in violence against women campaigning.

10. Bringing ActionAid's campaigning vision to life

As part of our People's Action strategy, we have committed to becoming a "more effective campaigning force". To do this we will invest in campaigning systems, skills, policy analysis and research, and tools to link, organise and energise our partners and supporters at all levels. We are committing to going much further than ever before and building on past successes in strengthening our campaigning.

Our ambition of becoming an effective campaigning force is closely linked to a number of other priorities in the strategy, including raising ActionAid's profile, increasing the organisation's supporter base to more than five million people and mobilising five million young people as key change-makers. Achieving these goals will involve the whole organisation and us planning and delivering our campaigns differently.

Integration is key to improving our capacity to campaign. Campaigning is a multi-functional process and must involve a variety of different roles across the organisation. To strengthen ActionAid's ability to work as an integrated organisation across functions, regions and national structures, we will develop and deliver our multi-country campaigns using cross-disciplinary global campaign delivery teams. Ideally, these teams will be replicated at national level. We will also create a transparent and systematic process for the ongoing review and planning of our multi-country campaigns. We will integrate annual workplans from the local to the national and international level, and identify synergies between functions for the coming year to help us make the most of external opportunities.

We need to dedicate adequate resources to our campaign systems, skills, policy analysis, research and tools to deliver effective campaigns that mobilise people in the north and the south to campaign with us. We will ensure all staff have a firm understanding of the political rationale for why campaigning is part of our HRBA. Staff more directly involved with campaigns, including fundraisers, programme staff, communications staff and management, need to have a basic understanding of campaigning. However, aside from general capacity-building for all staff, we need to specifically task a sufficient number of staff with delivering our campaigns at local, national and international levels.

Building campaigning capacity will also involve understanding and recognising the added value of the synergy between empowerment, solidarity and campaigning. Resources are much more than money, but we still need money if we are to realise our ambition to become an effective campaigning force. By integrating our campaign work better between local, national and international level and between functions, we will use the money we already invest in campaigning to greater effect. But in addition, we will need to invest additional funds in running our campaigns if they are to be able to contribute to increasing ActionAid's profile and income, especially of unrestricted funds.

11. Monitoring campaigns

Monitoring and evaluation are critical to improving our campaigning. Monitoring enables us to assess, over the life of a campaign, whether we need to shift our plans according to changes in or more information about the external environment (for example, changes in the external political context), or in light of lessons learned from the campaign to date. This is especially important as the pace of change in campaigns can be very fast, so the process of revision must be light and nimble.

Through evaluation we must demonstrate the impact of our campaigning. This will enable us to be more accountable to stakeholders and supporters, and generate more support. Change is a result of many factors and it can be extremely difficult to disentangle the role of ActionAid versus other actors or external factors. This is often referred to as a problem with "attribution". It might be that we are meeting our campaign goals but this could have very little to do with our campaigning and more to do with other factors. On the other hand, we could be doing excellent campaigning work, but not yet be able to achieve change because the balance of power is still too strongly against us. While the changes we aim to bring about through campaigning are inherently dynamic and often very complex, presenting challenges for proving impact, there are ways to mitigate this.

Firstly, the big changes we are often trying to achieve through campaigning can take time. To overcome this, we can measure progress as we go along by being clear – at the outset – about what the stepping stones to progress are. The "critical pathway" is a tool for doing this, and is used in part two of this resource book for the change promises.

Secondly, campaigning is likely to involve a number of actors, which may make it difficult to measure ActionAid's specific contribution to change, especially when we are playing a background role as we often do in our HRBA. However, clearly articulating the change we want to see and being very clear about what ActionAid's specific contribution will be can help us disentangle our role from others. Once we are clear on our specific contribution, how to evaluate our success becomes clearer. For example, if our specific contribution is to bring a stronger women's rights analysis to a policy process, we can monitor that specific element. If our contribution is to ensure links between national alliances and people living in poverty, or to broaden an alliance to involve new stakeholders, we can get feedback on that specific element. We can even monitor, and claim as a success, that we have not dominated a process.

Thirdly, it can be challenging to source the kind of evidence and data we need to effectively monitor and evaluate our campaigns. A few examples of data we can use are:

- **Media analysis.** Monitoring the media coverage campaign activities generate; asking journalists what they think the impact of our campaign was or about the quality of our work.

- **Public opinion.** We could measure this through web traffic to the campaign site or other sites where the campaign is prominent. A more expensive option is opinion polls of supporters or target groups. Affiliates who engage directly with supporters could build this into their regular contact questions, asking people if they have seen the campaign and what they think of it.
- **Other NGOs.** Asking fellow NGOs what they think about our campaigns and their impacts is a much easier option. An efficient way to manage this is to assign someone in your campaign team to check in with other NGOs throughout a campaign process (particularly after key actions) rather than waiting until the end of the campaign.
- **Decision-makers.** It is possible to ask targets if our campaigning influenced them. Unless we have a close lobbying relationship, access can be a problem, so it is good to identify from the outset, as part of the strategy, whether anyone has any contacts who can give insight.

Getting our monitoring and evaluation processes right means getting our campaign strategy right. The strategy should give clear goals for what we will monitor and evaluate over the lifetime of a campaign. In part two, we illustrate the relationship between our three international campaigns and their pathways to change and those of the overall change promises. This may be helpful to you in linking campaigns more closely to other long-term processes of change that bridge different organisational levels. You will also find indicators that you can draw on as you define your indicators for campaigns that aim to advance one or more of the change promises.

For more ideas on how to monitor campaigns, visit <http://act.ai/LCgULK>